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1. Juvenile literature - Fiction, American.

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FRONTISPIECE. Mary Burns.

MARY BURNS;

OR,

BESETTING SINS.

BY

AUNT FRIENDLY,

Sarah S. (T.) Baker

"MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR THEE."

BENEFICIARY
CONGREGATIONAL
SABBATH SCH

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ANSON D. F. RANDOLPH,
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WQR 19 FEB '36

MARY BURNS.

Chapter First.

Mr. Hobart's sleigh was one of those large, old-fashioned vehicles, in which there is always room for at least one more than the family. That sleigh had its own share of buffalo-robes, afghans, and contrivances, for keeping the feet warm; yet, whenever a party was to start out in it, Mrs. Hobart was sure to produce an extra quantity of shawls, and to see every body wrapped up as carefully as if going on one of Dr. Kane's trips of exploration. Mrs. Hobart did not often go abroad herself,

and it was not she who was preparing for a drive in the great sleigh on the morning when our story commences.

No, no; Mrs. Hobart had other matters to attend to. There was an oven full of good things baking in the kitchen, and Mrs. Hobart could not have trusted even old Keturah, the faithful cook, to judge when the mince-pies had gained just the right touch of soft brown. Only Mrs. Hobart could know at a glance when the great pound-cakes were "done to a T." She did not need a broom-splinter to try them; twenty years of experience had taught her other ways of finding out what had gone on in the oven.

Then there was a little room up-

stairs, which was to claim a large share of Mrs. Hobart's attention on this particular morning. She seemed determined it should be a perfect spot of its kind, perfect in neatness at least — white counterpane, white bureau-cover, white curtains, all vying in whiteness with the snow that so beautifully clothed the world without.

But we must leave the good matron to her household duties, and look a little after the rest of the family.

Mr. Hobart was in the dining-room, enjoying the bright fire in the grate, and judiciously getting thoroughly warm, before starting out on his expedition. Mr. Hobart never bought a flimsy piece of cloth—he liked substan-

tials. Any body who looked at his overcoat could have told that at once. Such a thick, shaggy coat as it was! Such a mass of soft wool must have set a whole flock of sheep shivering at the shearing time. Let Mr. Hobart once start out warm, and he defied the cold to reach him through his frost-proof armor.

There was one place about Mr. Hobart that was always warm, summer and winter, year in and year out. The poor knew it; the afflicted knew it; his neighbors and his children knew it! That good, warm, kind heart of his could not throb as it did without letting itself be found out, and valued, too, as it deserved.

Mr. Hobart was conscious of some very peculiar feelings going on in his left side, as he sat there by the fire, and the varying expressions that crossed his frank, kindly face, made it plain that something more than usual was agitating his mind. He was not left long to his meditations, for two happy, healthy-looking girls soon burst in upon him, with the exclamation:

"Now we are all ready, father. I hope you are not tired of waiting for us!"

"Not a bit of it," said the father, kindly. He had been too busy with his meditations to think of the flight of time. "Get warm before you start; that's my way;" and he drew them to-

ward the fire, and put an arm round each as they stood.

The father looked proudly and fondly from one to the other. He could not say which pleased him best, his merry, black-eyed Jenny, or his more thoughtful, matter-of-fact, fair-haired Salome.

"You are my own dear girls; I know it and feel it," said Mr. Hobart; "and yet it seems to me but as yesterday when I was a young man and had a dear little sister, my pet and plaything, the being I loved best in the world. We were orphans, your aunt and I, and of course I tried to be as much as I could to her, and make her happy. I believe I made out pretty

well, for a more light-hearted, sunny-tempered little creature there never was in the world. She was always very small; and when she was twelve —your age, girls—I could carry her about on my shoulder, and never have an ache after it. Why, one of my twins could have shaken her life out of her!" and the father smiled as he looked at the strong, plump girls beside him. "I loved her dearly for all that, and perhaps felt all the more tenderly to her, because she was such a wee thing. You know how early she married. It was a sad trial to me to see her leave me just when I thought I should be able to do more for her than ever before. I did not think she could have

found any body who loved her as truly and as well as I did. But I did not cross her: she had her way, and seemed so happy that I could not complain. She has never repented her choice, the dear, loving little woman! She has had her own cares with her large family, and now you know your uncle has lost every thing, and will have to begin anew, with the gray hairs about his temples. I wish I could set him up in his old business, but I can't do that; I have my own family to provide for. I have done what I can for your uncle, and now I want to do for his little Mary, as if she were my own little sister Mary, who was so dear to me long ago. It goes hard with her mother to part

with her; but she would not stand in her child's way. Now, girls, I look to you to make your cousin happy, and to do all you can for her for my sake."

"I'll do what I can, father," said Salome quietly.

Jenny had somehow managed to get her black eyes thoroughly wet with salt water while her father was talking; but she dashed away the bright drops, and said warmly:

"I'll treat her just like a sister, and I mean to love her dearly."

"Just like you! Just like you both!" said the father, kissing his children affectionately. "I can trust you, Salome, though you do not start very warmly."

"I don't want to promise more than I can come up to," said Salome in her own quiet way.

"Love your cousin, and all will be right. But now we must be off, or she will find herself standing at the dépôt, alone among strangers, with nobody to give her a welcome."

Mr. Hobart led the way to the great sleigh. Mrs. Hobart came out to see that Jack Frost was put completely at defiance; and then the merry bells jingled, and Bob and Tim set off at as fast a trot as if they had heard the locomotive in their ears.

Chapter Second.

Of course Mr. Hobart was at the dépôt in time. He had been famed for punctuality for forty years; and he was not going to lose his character now.

He was ready, when the cars stopped, to open his arms to his niece, as soon as she should appear.

He handed down women with children, and various other unprotected strangers, before he saw the face for which he was looking. He had made up his mind he should know Mary Burns at a glance, though he had not seen her since she was an infant.

A slender young girl put her head timidly through the door, when the car was almost empty.

"Mary! Mary Burns, this way, dear!" called the uncle's kind voice; and in another moment the little niece was folded to his breast.

Jenny and Salome were still sitting in the sleigh, (for there was no dépôt at Balgrove station then.)

"Here, my daughters, here's your cousin Mary, our dear Mary!" said the father, as he fairly lifted the slender girl into the sleigh, and placed her beside his own children.

"How do you do, cousin Mary?" said Salome, asking the question as if expecting an answer. Jenny threw her arms

round Mary's neck, and kissed her in silence, but the next minute she said: "Here, sit down between Salome and me. We have four miles to ride, and we shall have the wind in our faces as we go back. Won't you have my vail?"

"No, I thank you," said Mary, in a low, gentle voice; "you had better keep it for yourself."

"One vail can cover two faces," said Jenny, as she threw her capacious barege vail over her cousin's bonnet and her own.

Was Salome freezing in that cold air? She had certainly stiffened up wonderfully in a few moments. Salome would have given all she owned for Jenny's easy way of getting on with strangers. Jenny's frank manner always made Sa-

lome more distant; perhaps a little jealousy helped to bring this about.

It did not take long for Mr. Hobart and black Peter to get Mary's great trunk into the sleigh; and the whole party were soon on the homeward drive.

That great trunk Salome surveyed with the same disapproving eyes that she had cast on her cousin's small velvet bonnet and particularly handsome cloak.

"Very unsuitable, under the circumstances," thought Salome to herself. "If my father had failed, I should wish to dress very plainly, and a very small wardrobe would satisfy me."

Like too many other people, Salome associated failure with general destruction of all valuables, portable or wear-

able. She did not realize that it would have been a most unnecessary expense for Mary to cast aside the clothes she had, in order to purchase the plain suit adapted, in Salome's view, to present circumstances. Mary felt that she must be particularly careful of her abundant supply of nice clothing, but she had no idea of throwing any of it away.

Mary's dress was just now very far from her thoughts. She could not talk much on the ride, though she bowed now and then, and smiled pleasantly in answer to Jenny's lively chat. Mary was thinking of her aunt Hobart, and wishing that the meeting was over.

That interview was not a very terrible thing; it was short enough, surely

Mrs. Hobart caught the sound of the bells, and was on the steps to meet the returning party.

"Dear!" That was all Mrs. Hobart said, as she threw her arms round her niece. In another moment she added, in her quick way: "Here, Peter, take the trunk up-stairs now, into the little front-room, mind."

"Mary, child, you had better go up too, and take possession of your room at once," said Mrs. Hobart, after a thoughtful look.

"No, no, wife, let Mary get warmed through first," said Mr. Hobart, leading the shivering girl to the cheerful dining-room fire.

To be warmed through, that was just

what Mary wanted, before she was left to herself. If she had gone up-stairs then, it would have been to sit down on her trunk and take a hearty cry, pretty and attractive as her room was looking.

"Here, sit on my knee, and warm those little feet," said Mr. Hobart, suiting the action to the word. Mary put up her gaiter-boots to the fire. They were shabby enough to suit Salome. Shoes will not last forever, and ready money was scarce at Mr. Burns's.

Mr. Hobart saw the poor little boots, and he found it hard to keep up his cheerful tone. But he did; he had a motive and a good one, and that carried him through.

"Mary," he said, as he rubbed her

cheeks gently with his strong hand, "I am going to have you fat and rosy, a real country girl. Can you ride on horseback?"

"I never tried, uncle," said Mary, her face looking full of interest.

"My twins will teach you how; they sit as firm as circus-riders. But we can't begin now, with all this snow on the ground. The spring will be here, though, before a great while, and then you shall have your first lessons."

"Have you a very safe horse?" asked Mary timidly.

"Oh! yes, cousin Mary, I can ride old Harry with my eyes shut," broke in Jenny.

"There's no difficulty about Harry,

if you only let him alone; trying to manage him makes him restive. He is not used to it. But here is work of another kind for us to do, just now," said Mr. Hobart cheerily.

Mrs. Hobart came in at the moment, followed by Susannah, bearing a tray, on which a comfortable luncheon was invitingly set out.

"Now, Mary, we are going to have something to refresh ourselves with, after our ride," said Mr. Hobart, placing Mary in a chair beside the table, and sitting down near her, as if he meant to make a hearty meal. Why, it was not three hours since Mr. Hobart had done honor to one of those particularly nice breakfasts his wife delighted to

provide; he could not be hungry already. Yet Mr. Hobart helped himself, helped his daughters, helped every body, and began in such good earnest, that Mary unconsciously followed his example, and soon found herself making a wonderfully good meal, laughing, meantime, at her uncle's lively chat. She did not even notice that he did more talking than eating, after his first vigorous commencement.

Mary had not felt like taking any refreshment at the wayside hotel, where she had stopped for breakfast, though the gentleman under whose care she had traveled all the day and night before, urged her most warmly to do so. There she was to part from her kind

escort. He was to go on in a different direction, while she had an hour to ride alone in the cars, and meditate upon the coming meeting with her relatives.

That meeting was over now, and Mary felt that she had at least one friend in her new home. She knew her uncle loved her; only love could make any one so tender and so thoughtful for her comfort.

"Now, Pussy, you must go up to your room, and settle down as one of us," said Mr. Hobart, when he was sure that Mary's body was fairly warmed and strengthened by nourishing food. He could trust her to herself now.

To herself she was not to be immediately left. Both Jenny and Salome

escorted her to her room, and perched themselves on the bed, to superintend her unpacking.

Salome had no little curiosity to know what that great trunk contained, and Jenny really meant to help her cousin in the business of putting her things in order in her new quarters.

"Mother has had a fire made in here," said Salome, glancing toward the roaring air-tight stove; "she said you were very likely accustomed to it, and would take cold without it. We never have a fire in our room."

Salome always said just what she happened to think, and, if it were true, she did not trouble herself to ask whether it were agreeable or not.

"I have been accustomed to a fire in my room," said Mary, in a low voice, "but perhaps I could get used to doing without it."

Mary Burns had that sensitiveness that feels the slightest insinuation, and is wounded by every chance shot. Was there any armor to shield her from pain in this rough world?

"You need not get used to any such thing," said Jenny warmly; "father said you must be made just as comfortable and happy here as if it were your own home."

The tears rushed to Mary's eyes, but they fell unnoticed, as she bent down to unlock her trunk.

Mary's wardrobe was quite a curios-

ity to both of the cousins, knowing little, as they did, of the ways and fashions of the great city.

Salome was indulging in some particularly uncharitable reflections upon extravagance and the like failings, when Mary jumped up suddenly from her position on the floor, and said: "Here, cousin Salome, mother said I had better give you this vail; she thought it would not be suitable for me to wear so expensive a thing now; and Jenny, these collars she wanted me to give to you for the same reason."

"Thank you! thank you!" said Jenny warmly; but Salome was silent, her conscience rebuked her, and she could not speak. She would not ap-

pear amiable, when she had been feeling unkindly. Salome was at least thoroughly truthful.

"I want to show my collars to mother," said Jenny, hurrying from the room. Salome followed; she felt stiff and constrained, and a change of scene was just what she wanted.

Mary heard their receding footsteps, as they sought Mrs. Hobart, in her little sewing-room below, and then the young stranger looked about her with a sense of relief.

She was glad to be alone for a moment, yet not alone, for then her best Friend was particularly present.

Mary turned the little button that fastened her door, and then she knelt

down, to pour out her heart to the only long-known, long-loved Being who was with her.

Mary had parted from father, mother, and brothers and sisters, and now more welcome than ever seemed to her the truth, "There is one who sticketh closer than a brother," and "whose eyes are in every place."

That All-seeing Eye of love she knew had followed her in her journey, and was now looking upon her in her new home. She did not shrink from the gaze of the pure and perfect God, for she was reconciled to him, through his Son Christ Jesus, and dared to call him her heavenly Father.

Mary was not a perfect Christian.

She knew it and felt it in her inmost heart, and this knowledge made her the more anxious to plead for strength to do her duty faithfully in her present position, and to struggle manfully against her besetting sins, which she saw were to be sorely tried.

Chapter Third.

There is an old proverb that Mrs. Hobart had no idea of seeing verified in her own home. It has been said, that "An industrious mother makes an idle daughter;" but this was by no means true in the present instance.

Mrs. Hobart had taught all her family that "Idleness is the mother of mischief." From the time that they could say Dr. Watts' hymn about the "Busy Bee," they began to imitate the ways of that pattern insect.

Saturday morning was a time of particular industry in the household at

Pure Spring, as Mr. Hobart's place was called. On that morning there was something for every member of the family to do, from old Keturah down to the twins.

Jack and Joe, the mischievous brothers, had to leave their play; there was wood to be cut, there were apples to be sorted, there were nuts to be cracked for Sunday; that the boys well knew, and they were as sure that it behooved them to be promptly at their duty.

Mary Burns had arrived at her aunt's on Friday. "A mighty bad sign," old Keturah had said, with a knowing shake of her head, as if there were any day without a blessing for those who are in the path of duty!

Mary had been treated with a kind of particular courtesy at first; Jenny and Salome had brought out their portfolios of engravings and their embroidery, their favorite books and their pet kittens, and had indeed done all in their power to entertain the stranger. Their mother had given them full permission to spend their time as they pleased; but such a state of things could not be allowed to last. "That would never do," Mrs. Hobart said to herself, as she was rising, on Saturday morning, and she showed the heartiness of her sentiment as soon as breakfast was over.

"Now, Mary," said the good matron, "this is one of our busy days, and we

are going to make you quite at home. You shall go to work like the rest of us. So put on an old dress; that nice plaid is not fit for Saturday morning. Put on an old dress, and then I will give you a broom, and you can sweep the sewing-room, while Jenny sweeps the parlor, and Salome goes up with me to the bed-rooms."

There was no reason why Mary should have been ashamed of having no old dresses. Small as she was, she had out-grown her last year's supply of winter clothing, and had just been fitted up nicely, when her father's failure came upon the family like a thunder-clap from clear air. How many homes heard the same sudden news of terror in 1857!

Poor Mary! She blushed crimson, as she said: "This is one of my school-dresses, aunt. I have nothing plainer."

"I'll lend you an apron. I have one that will cover you all up," said Jenny quickly.

"Yes, that is the best thing that can be done under the circumstances," said Mrs. Hobart, walking away with Salome.

Mary felt as if she had displeased her aunt, and was most uncomfortable. She did not dare to call after her and tell her she knew no more about sweeping than about Algebra. "I ought to learn; I will try," thought Mary. "It must be very easy."

Jenny soon came in with a long-

sleeved gingham apron, which was a complete cover-all for Mary. Jenny smiled as she tried it, and then put a handkerchief over her cousin's brown hair. "You look like one of the little choristers in Mrs. Wheelwright's picture," she said.

Mary did not feel like singing just then. She took the broom that Jenny handed her, and began timidly and awkwardly to use it.

"Don't sweep so," said Jenny with a frightened look. "Mother does not like the brooms all pushed down on one side. She says that is a sure sign of a poor sweeper. Here, do as I do."

Mary tried again, but Jenny laughed and said:

"I do not believe you are a very old hand at the business, but you will soon learn, if you take pains. I can't stand here, though, talking. I must be off to my own work. Mother likes us to be very industrious on Saturday morning."

Mary wanted to please her aunt, and she determined to do her work thoroughly, at least, if not scientifically. Not a crook or corner of the room escaped her. There were no secret lurking-places left for the dust under the old-fashioned secretary, or the long, low couch. Mary moved every thing that could be moved; more by sheer determination than by lawful, natural strength, as she soon felt in her weary side and back. The room looked clean, however, and she was satisfied.

It was a pretty, cheerful spot, and Mary felt a kind of glow, half from exercise, half from having accomplished a difficult duty, as she sat down by the window a moment, when her work was done.

Not a scrap nor a thread was left on the carpet. Mary had patiently worked at the most obstinate of them until they had yielded to their fate, and gone the way of the rest. The heaping dust-pan she had placed outside the door until Jenny should finish her work, and come to tell her what was to be done with it. Mrs. Hobart appeared first.

"What!" she exclaimed in surprise, as the mass of gayly-tinted wool and brown dust met her eyes, "Jenny!

Jenny! it won't do to wear out the carpets that way. You must learn to be a better sweeper."

"It was I, aunt. I am not much of a sweeper," said Mary, stepping into the hall.

It required no little moral courage for Mary to make that slight confession, for she had a morbid dread of blame.

"Oh! it was you, child, was it?" said Mrs. Hobart kindly. "Well, you must learn to use your broom more lightly. You have made the room look very nicely," and Mrs. Hobart glanced approvingly round her favorite resort. "Now, dear, you may go and get ready to come here with your sewing. The twins do their mending on Saturday

morning. Have you any thing of that kind to do?"

"I have no work with me but a mat I was crocheting. Perhaps there is something I can do for you," said Mary gently.

"I'll find you some work. I like plain sewing in the day-time; fancy work will do for the evening," said Mrs. Hobart decidedly.

Mary went up-stairs. Nothing of any consequence had happened. Her aunt had not been unkind to her, and yet Mary felt very unhappy. She knew that her own sensitiveness was at fault, and yet she was ready to cry.

"You can be happy at your aunt's if you try to do your duty, and are

kind and cheerful. Keep down your sensitiveness, and remember that God loves you, and your mother loves you, and all will go well."

These had been Mrs. Burns's parting words to her little daughter, and Mary now remembered them. She would not let her sensitiveness make her unhappy; she would go down to meet her cousins with a smiling face. Mary calmed her ruffled spirit by a glance at a verse in her Bible, and a moment of prayer to her best Friend, and then she was ready to make herself fit to appear in the sewing-room.

She found Mrs. Hobart and the girls already there, looking very cozy and agreeable.

A slight shadow passed over Salome's face, as Mary put down her pretty work-box on the table. Salome had been ready to treat her *poor* cousin very kindly, but she did not quite relish seeing that cousin more handsomely provided for in every way than herself.

"Here, Mary," said Mrs. Hobart, "you can sew on this shirt for your uncle; I have basted the work, as you may not know how to do it without."

"Mamma never bastes for us," said Salome with a satisfied air.

"I should love to work for uncle," Mary had been going to say, but Salome's remark silenced her, and she took her sewing without a word.

"What are you doing, Mary?" said

Jenny a moment after, as she saw Mary unconsciously opening and shutting her hands slowly, with a discomforted look.

"My fingers feel unpleasantly," said Mary quietly. She did not name the white blisters that her vigorous sweeping had brought to her delicate hands.

Very slowly and carefully Mary set stitch after stitch in the long seam. She had tried her best, and yet her work did not have a masterly air, and she knew it.

It was not to be supposed that Mrs. Hobart could be left to sit quietly in the sewing-room on Saturday morning. Susannah had a question to put every five minutes, and old Keturah at last

declared it absolutely necessary that her mistress should superintend some cleaning going on in her department.

When Mrs. Hobart returned after this last trip, Jenny exclaimed:

"Mary is perfectly tired out with sewing. She has a pain in her side. I know she has, though she won't say so."

Mary would gladly have borne double the pain she was suffering, rather than have become the object of attention.

"Are you tired, my dear?" said Mrs. Hobart kindly. "Don't sew any more. Run up to the attic and see what Jack and Joe are about; that will give you a little exercise."

"May we go too, mamma?" said Salome.

"No, my dear; your work is not done. You must remember that you are a year older than your cousin, and you are both, I am thankful to say, very strong and healthy."

"Strong and healthy," thought Mary, as she went up-stairs. "I wonder if aunt thinks it a very great misfortune to be like me!"

Sensitiveness again. Mary had no business to have any such wonderings.

Chapter Fourth.

JACK and Joe Hobart were not twins, but they seemed to be almost as inseparable as if they were held together by some invisible cord. Perhaps the bond was as much fondness for fun as brotherly love. Be that as it may, if Jack's round curly head was put in at the door, you were just as sure that Joe's long face was somewhere behind him, as if you had seen the two side by side. In any other household they would have been a perfect nuisance; and even Mr. Hobart's genial spirit, and his wife's good management, could not always keep them in order.

They had been known to get into a pitched battle in the apple-room, and make pippins, Ramboes, Baldwins, and greenings do duty as warlike missiles.

On this particular morning they had been obliged to leave their snow-man noseless and with but one arm, in order to enter upon their lawful employments, and their aggrieved spirits were likely to seek some revenge before the day was over.

Mary Burns had a light, gentle step, and she was fairly up the attic stairs before the boys were aware of her approach.

"Why, Cousin Mary! is that you?" exclaimed Jack, with a start. "We are in a little trouble just now."

"It's an ugly business!" said Joe, holding up his hand, from which the blood was freely dripping. "I've cut my finger, you see, and I don't just know what to do with it. Mother set us to cutting up this box of soap to spread here, and Jack and I got to trying which could cut the fastest, and I made a chance slip, and here it is!"

As Joe spoke he held his handkerchief under the wounded finger, careful that not a single drop should taint the clean attic floor.

"Let me bind it up for you," said Mary, taking out her pocket-handkerchief. "Oh! here is a bit of rag—the very thing. Now we can manage nicely."

Mary's gentle touch was just suited for the present occasion, and so Joe declared.

"Now if it had been Salome," he said, "she would have managed to hurt me somehow before she got through, and Jenny would have been in such a flutter, she could not have done a thing. See here, Jack, that's a real surgical operation!"

Joe held up his finger, with its white night-cap on, and then said briskly:

"Now we had better finish what we are about, or the dinner-bell will ring."

"I'll help you," said Mary. "I'll lay the pieces in order while you boys cut them."

The last bar was cut and disposed

of, when the bell rang out its summons to dinner.

"Now for it!" said Jack, "see who will get down first. Mary, run, run for your life!"

There was such an appearance of hearty pursuit on the part of the boys, that Mary rushed headlong down the stairs, followed by the noisy fellows. No small disturbance was created, of course.

"What rudeness, boys!" exclaimed Mrs. Hobart, appearing at the dining-room door just in time to receive Mary in her arms. "Mary! Mary Burns!" said Mrs. Hobart in surprise.

"Excuse me, aunt!" said Mary, who was quite out of breath with the race.

"Certainly, dear," said Mrs. Hobart. "Boys, you must learn to be more quiet in the house."

The reproof reached Mary, though she was not directly addressed, and she sat down to dinner in a most subdued state.

The meal went on in silence, for it was plain that the boys had fallen under their mother's displeasure, and she wished to produce an effect upon them.

"Don't cut with your left hand, Joe," said the mother, looking up suddenly from her plate, and detecting Joe in some most awkward maneuvers with his knife. The reason was obvious at the same moment. "You

have cut yourself; not a bad hurt, I hope," and Mrs. Hobart's face softened.

"Nothing to speak of," said Joe, in his most manly way.

Mrs. Hobart bent forward to notice the bit of rag round the finger, and exclaimed:

"I declare, there is the gusset we were looking for, girls. How did you get hold of it, Joe?"

Mary turned very red as she said: "I—I tied up his finger with a scrap I found in my pocket. I am very sorry. I must have carried it off by mistake. I hope it will do no harm."

"It is no matter. I have no muslin like it in the house. It is of no consequence," said Mrs. Hobart, trying not

to look annoyed. The good lady was beginning to fear that her niece was by no means the useful, practical person she should be.

Mary read her aunt's unspoken disapproval in a way that is a peculiar gift of sensitive people, and her appetite was gone for that meal. How she wished her uncle was at home to come in with some of his cheerful, genial talk. He, good man, was full forty miles away, and was not to return until evening.

Before that time came Mary was thoroughly disheartened. She did not need more than one day at Pure Spring, to see that she was most particularly out of place in the busy

household. She could do nothing that was done there, and what she could do seemed never thought of as a part of a girl's education.

She had found out that both Jenny and Salome were skillful bakers, talking of making bread and cake as common occurrences, and boasting of having in a sudden emergency cooked a whole dinner, which their father declared to be the best he had ever eaten. Mary Burns could do nothing in that line! Was she then utterly worthless?

She thought so. She had not naturally a high opinion of herself, and her sensitiveness now came in to make her feel she was but a poor, delicate,

useless being, in comparison with the self-possessed, effective Salome, or the skillful, rapid Jenny

Mary was glad when it was time to go to her own room. A thoroughly home-sick girl she was, when she closed the door of her little fortress, and sat down within it. Mary's enemies were not all outside. She was too conscientious not to know that. She was well aware that nothing had occurred to throw a shadow over a cheerful, buoyant, self-respectful spirit. But, sensitive as she was, how was she to get on at Pure Spring?

"I can never, never be happy here!" said Mary, as she bowed her head on her hands, in bitterness of spirit. "O

mother! dear mother! I wish I were at home again."

That mother was too far away to hear the sorrowful words of her child. But there was now a heavy tread, as of some one coming along the upper hall. In another moment there was a knock upon Mary's door. She hastily wiped away her tears, and then answered the loud knock.

"Here's a letter for you, darling," said her uncle's kind voice. "A letter from your mother, dear. I hope that will give you a sound sleep. Good night."

Mr. Hobart kissed Mary's face, still moist with tears; but he did not seem to notice that, or her swollen eyes; but

he went down-stairs full of tender pity for the little stranger.

"A letter from mother," said Mary to herself, as she clasped the treasure closely in her hand. "To come, too, just when I needed it most." There was a trace of providential care in this to Mary's eyes. "God loves you! your mother loves you!" These words came to Mary's mind, and she felt conscience-smitten at her late burst of despairing feeling. With her mother's letter in her hand, she knelt down to ask forgiveness for the rebellious, discontented spirit which had so lately led her astray. She would try to learn in "whatsoever state she was, therewith to be content."

Mary's letter was full of tenderness, such tenderness as only springs from a loving mother's heart. What a cordial it was to the little stranger, in the midst of her loneliness. It was a cheerful letter, too; not a shadow of care over it. There were pretty sayings of the baby-brother, taken down fresh from his rosy lips. There were little items of household news, which seemed to carry Mary right back to the dear fireside. Mrs. Burns was too true a mother to say one word that could dim the young eyes she loved so well. Her own anxieties and harassing trials were for the time forgotten, that she might comfort the distant Mary.

The child she would miss most she

had spared, for the principles that made Mary beloved at home the mother felt would be her safeguard among strangers. Mary might gain by her visit to her aunt's, but she would not lose; for she was one of the "little ones in Jesus," for whom it is promised "that all things shall work together for good." Mrs. Burns had confidence in Mary's principles, but she did not for that reason forbear the "line upon line, and precept upon precept," by which even the best of us need to be guided in the heavenly way. Kind advice there was, such as could only come from one who knew Mary's heart, as a loved and trusted mother alone could know it.

"I leave you to your uncle, Mary, without a fear;" wrote Mrs. Burns. "John Hobart has grown none the less tender for his gray hairs. When you feel lonely and disheartened, go first to your Saviour; then take the human help he places close at hand. Never be afraid to look to your uncle for a loving smile or an affectionate caress. You will never find him too busy or too self-absorbed to give a little sunlight to his sister Mary's child. I know my brother thoroughly. God bless him! You will love your uncle at once, of course; and your aunt and cousins you can love if you will. You can love them if you will keep down your sensitiveness, and pass over trifles,

believing in their hearty desire to be kind to you. Your aunt is so conscious of her own good intentions that she never thinks it possible that any thing she says can be taken amiss. Love her, Mary; learn from her! Her practical, useful spirit is just what you need now. I was but a child when I married, and I have never been much else in many things. I feel now that I have not done quite right by you. I have only prepared you for one condition of life; a condition you may never fill. Your aunt Hobart's is a safer plan. Riches take wing in a moment, and a woman should be prepared to make home happy and comfortable, however humble that home may be. Try to

learn to be a useful, industrious girl, and so you may be a great assistance to your mother. I know that will be a strong motive to you, darling. But I am sure mere hand-work will not satisfy you and keep you cheerful; you must have heart-work too, something to do for your Lord and Master. Your simplest effort to make those around you happy will be acknowledged as so much done for him. Be on the watch to say the kind thing that will put peace in the place of a coming quarrel. Let the boys even tease you, if so they are kept out of other mischief. Perhaps there is some greater good for you to do at your aunt's. Perhaps there is some soul there to whom you are to

bear the heavenly message. Some servant, some humble person may be thrown in your way, to whom you may have the privilege of pointing out the true path. At any rate, dear child, if you live near to your Saviour, and drink of his spirit, then will a blessing fall on the house where there dwells an humble follower of the Lord. So you may be the means of much good.

"Again, with devoted affection,

"YOUR MOTHER."

Calm, sweet, and trustful was Mary's spirit, when she laid her head that night on her pillow. Love to God and to her mother filled her young heart, and she was nerved for coming duties.

Chapter Fifth.

When Mary came down into the cheerful dining-room on Sunday morning, she wondered that any thing could have seemed gloomy at Pure Spring the day before. Her uncle's kindly spirit seemed to pervade all the family, and the subdued "Sabbath behavior" of the boys was quite a relief after the turmoil of the week.

"We shall have to leave you at home to-day, birdie," said Mr. Hobart, looking at the falling sleet; "only country girls can bear going out in such weather." As he spoke, he drew

Mary tenderly to his side; and she did not feel it such a trial to be delicate, after all. Her uncle seemed to love her just as well. She would take her disappointment cheerfully.

"I will try to make the best of the day at home," she said pleasantly.

"What will you do here all by yourself?" said Mr. Hobart, looking into the young face that seemed to have a particular charm for him. He was thinking more of those dear familiar family features than of what he said. But Mary took home his question. She blushed deeply as she answered:

"I shall have my Bible and my prayer-book, uncle; and mother says,

a good Sunday at home now and then ought not to be a lost day."

"Dear Mary! that is just like her," said Mr. Hobart, kissing his little niece.

Mary felt very happy. It was so pleasant to know that her mother was beloved.

Mary's joy would have been dashed in a moment, if she could have seen the expression on Salome's face. Salome did not mean that any body should see it. She knew too well the bitter jealousy that was written there. Salome could hide her face from human friends, but the all-seeing Eye was on her sin-tossed heart.

Did Salome forget that Mary was an exile from her own home and those

whom she loved best? Did she forget that Mary needed particular tenderness to bring out her shrinking, sensitive spirit?

Jealousy is selfishness, selfishness in one of its worst forms. It finds food for misery, while there is another to be praised, another to be preferred.

Truly "the heart knoweth its own bitterness," and the bitterness of jealousy is jealousy's sure, cruel, immediate punishment. Salome's Sabbath brightness was gone; there was one overclouded face to sit down at the breakfast-table. Mary stealing her father's affection was the bugbear to Salome's mind. As if any true, loving daughter could lose her place in a

worthy father's heart! God has made that impossible.

Mary little knew that as the brightness fell on her, so she cast a shadow over Salome. She saw that her cousin was silent and uninterested at the breakfast-table, and fancying that she was indisposed or dispirited, she spoke to her with peculiar gentleness. She did not draw the attention of others upon her, but strove by her own thoughtful kindness to show her that there was one who felt for her and would gladly cheer her.

Salome was too truthful to seem pleased when really unamiable, and she found a moment to whisper unobserved:

"Don't, Mary; I don't feel like talking."

Mary was wounded; but her mother's caution against her sensitiveness rose to her mind, and with a strong effort she turned toward Mr. Hobart, who had given her a place at his right hand.

"Uncle," she said; "do you think we are going to have an ice-storm?"

A storm of another kind swept across Salome's face as her father gave Mary one of his most pleasant smiles and said:

"That is just what we are going to have, Mary; about the prettiest thing in nature, I think, at least when the sun comes out after the storm."

"Look at Salome!" exclaimed Jack; "isn't she now one of the ugliest girls in the world? Why, she would crack a looking-glass two inches thick!"

"Then you shan't see my face," said Salome, throwing her handkerchief over her face, that she might hide the expression that had told its own story.

Mary expected quite a scene to follow. Of course Salome would cry; she could not stand such an attack as that! Salome was proof against teasing; she never thought of getting hurt or angry at such trifles. Her temptations were of another kind.

"You shan't tease Salome," said Jenny quickly.

"Then I'll tease you. What is the

reason you always want to have a finger in every pie?" said Jack, hoping to get up a half-quarrel with Jenny, which was one of his favorite diversions.

"Because Jenny has such nice little white fingers to put in any pie, and makes such good pie-crust too," said Mr. Hobart, coming to the rescue in his own way.

Was Salome to have no peace? Now came a pang of jealousy that Jenny's skill was praised instead of her own. Truly "the way of transgressors is hard."

She had let the handkerchief fall from her face as soon as observation was turned from her. When would

the vail fall from her heart? When would Salome "see herself and repent in dust and ashes"?

Jenny's quick temper; Salome's jealousy; Mary's morbid sensitiveness; was there any cure for these sore diseases? Was there any sweetness for these bitter waters?

Sad indeed would it be for the pilgrims of earth if the religion of Christ promised only future salvation, and gave no present aid in the struggle against sin. Thanks be unto God! "having suffered being tempted, Christ is able to succor them that are tempted." His strength is made sufficient in the midst of our weakness.

Chapter Sixth.

MARY'S mother was right. A quiet Sunday at home may be productive of much good. When the providential Hand shuts us out of the sanctuary, it is still ready to lead us to the presence of Christ.

The little stranger at Pure Spring had reason to feel that day that Christ was nigh unto her, even in her heart. She sought him, and she found him "full of grace and truth."

As Mary knelt in her quiet room, she felt that in God's eyes she was as truly worshiping with his people as if her

voice had joined with theirs in some temple consecrated to his service.

To Him who can take in at a glance the doings in a thousand worlds, the tiny distances of earth are as nothing; his followers in the closet and in the Church are gathered together before him, and every true prayer is heard and answered.

When Mary laid aside her Bible, she felt full of love toward all for whom Christ died, and she longed to do something to extend his kingdom.

Her mother's advice flashed into her mind. "Some servant, some humble person may be thrown in your way, to whom you may have the privilege of pointing out the true path."

"I wonder what Keturah is doing!" thought Mary; "I mean to go and see."

Sunday was a dull day to Keturah. In Mrs. Hobart's household, the Sabbath was, as far as possible, a time of perfect rest from all worldly occupations. Then Keturah might fold her hard hands, and sit by the kitchen-fire, and Susannah was free, as she said, "to put on her best clothes, and to go to church with her own folks."

It is difficult for persons who have been trained to love the house of God, and who have known from childhood the pleasure of reading, to understand what Sunday is to persons who forget God through the week, and never have known any intellectual pleasures. It

is not enough to give the working-classes a day of rest: they must be taught how to make that rest profitable, and learn to love it, before they can have a real Sabbath.

It was always fully three hours before the party which went from Mr. Hobart's in the morning to the distant church returned at noon, full of talk about the sermon, and country neighbors, met but once a week.

"Three mortal hours! It makes me tired to think of it," said old Keturah, as she saw the sleigh drive off; "not to do nothin', nor set eyes on a creeter neither." Keturah walked round the clean kitchen; then took a thorough survey of various pantries and cup-

boards, occasionally disposing a dish differently or counting a pile of plates, to see that there had been no late breakages, through Susannah's carelessness. There really was nothing to be done. Every thing was in perfect order, and Keturah sat down at last by the great black stove. The very stove itself looked dreary to Keturah. No steam going up from closely-packed saucepans. No savory odors filling the air! All was neatness and quietness. Keturah looked very comfortable as she sat there by the fire. Very stupid she felt.

Keturah had thoroughly planned out her proceedings for the coming week. She had decided upon a new

course of severity with Susannah, and settled some stringent measures for keeping "the boys" out of the kitchen. "Boys will be boys! Young folks will be young folks! my mother used to say. Do what you can, the young blood will have its way." So mused Keturah, and so her thoughts wandered back to her own childhood, and step by step retraced her life, as she had been rosy-cheeked girl, wife, mother, widow, and childless old woman.

"No chick nor child to care for old Keturah," she thought; and her white cap moved from side to side, as she shook her head dolorously. Sunday was indeed a dull, sad day for Keturah. She liked the working-days far better.

Then labor kept her cheerful, kept her from dwelling on the dreary past and the dark, uncertain future.

Keturah was roused from her meditations by hearing a door opening in the hall, and a light footstep approaching.

"Who's that?" said Keturah, starting up, and taking the tongs valorously in her hand.

Keturah verily thought herself sole occupant of the house, and pledged as a faithful guardian to her mistress's property.

The kitchen-door opened before Keturah could reach it, and she dropped the tongs with a smile, as she saw the young face that looked in upon her.

"Why! Miss Mary, is it you?" she exclaimed. "I thought all the folks was gone to church!"

"I never go out in stormy weather," said Mary. "I am not used to it."

"Poor thing! you do look puny," said Keturah in a pitying tone. "An't you a most worried out staying up there by yourself?"

"Oh! no," said Mary brightly. "I have had a very pleasant morning. You know going to church is not all of Sunday."

"It would be bad luck to me if it was," said Keturah, "bein' as I don't get out once a month. It's the rheumatiz, child, it's the rheumatiz," and she made an ineffectual attempt to reach

the precise spot between her fat shoulders where the enemy was particularly troublesome.

"I thought, may be, you were down here alone," said Mary.

"Yes, and lonesome enough to be sure; sitting down to think is a poor business for one as has nothin' pleasant to think about."

"I see you have a good book here to read," said Mary, pointing to a neat Bible that Mrs. Hobart kept on the clock-shelf, as an unalienable part of the kitchen furniture. Clean as the white shelf itself was that Bible, and Mary could well believe that no hard hands had often turned its leaves.

"I never had no teachin' when I

was young. I an't a reader," said Keturah a little tartly.

"Perhaps you could learn if you had some body to teach you," said Mary persuasively.

"I can't be teached now. Miss Jenny tried a bit a while back, but she's a fly-away child, and she soon got tired of it, and so did I. It an't according to nature to take to books when you're old." Keturah spoke quickly, and Mary saw that the subject was unpleasant; but she was not discouraged. Standing on a chair, she reached down the neat Bible. She opened it, and then seating herself beside the fire she said:

"Shan't I read to you a little?

Mother likes to hear me read to her when we stay at home together on wet Sundays."

"Read out, child, if you have a mind," said Keturah, who cared more for Mary's company than for the reading.

Mrs. Burns did like to hear her little daughter read, and especially the precious words of Scripture, for she not only read agreeably, but with reverence and hearty interest.

Now Mary had chosen, or rather opened to, the fourteenth chapter of St. Mark, and there she began to read, feeling that "every word of Scripture is profitable," and that God could bless whatever she read to her hearer.

Keturah gave good attention, and it was plain from her face that she agreed in sentiment with those who "had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?" Keturah was principled against wasting, and she was interested to hear the reply.

"You see," said Mary, "our Saviour says that every where the Bible goes people shall know what that woman did out of love to him. Mother says this happened more than eighteen hundred years ago, yet here you and I read about it, sitting here in this kitchen."

"Sittin' here in this kitchen!" Keturah repeated. Mary's homely close

had made the thing seem real to the old woman. "It turned out as he said, didn't it? My!"

"That is just the way Jesus keeps his promises," said Mary timidly. She wanted to say something that would reach Keturah's heart.

"That's come true enough, any how," said Keturah.

There was a cold, matter-of-fact way about Keturah that showed very plainly that she was a stranger to the faithful Promiser and his free gifts, and Mary was discouraged. She read on, however, and Keturah seemed to turn a listening ear. The old woman sat quite still. Mary's voice became at last like a sweet murmuring of distant

music. Then it was quite forgotten. Keturah was in a sound sleep.

Mary looked up from her book. She was no longer needed at the old woman's side. She could do no good there now.

Mary stepped lightly toward the door, and went to her own room. Her first effort for Keturah had not ended very auspiciously, and her spirits drooped, but there was a whisper at her heart that bade her pray for the sleeper, and so be sure of a blessing on that old head. We may fail or go astray while trying to do good, but prayer is a sure means of usefulness. This Mary knew and believed. She asked for the spirit of God. She

prayed for its holy influence on Keturah, on her cousins, on every member of the household where she was a stranger. Such praying strangers are indeed angels entertained unawares.

Chapter Seventh.

THERE was no afternoon-service at the church which Mr. Hobart attended, as the clergyman had to divide his time among several scattered parishes.

When the Sunday-dinner, cold and plentiful, was over, the family settled themselves for the afternoon. Mr. Hobart took Jack with him into the dining-room, and set the mischievous fellow at committing to memory the list of the books of the Old Testament. Mrs. Hobart, meanwhile, had Joe studying at his catechism in the sewing-room. Two firebrands are not more

sure to make a blaze than were Jack and Joe to get into trouble, if left together on Sunday afternoon. This was such a well-known fact, that the thing had ceased to be attempted. Singly, the boys did well enough, for they were bright and intelligent, and could easily be interested in Sunday head-work, if not in what more nearly touched the heart.

Mary was left with the twins in the large, pleasant parlor. Salome had taken up Pilgrim's Progress, and had seated herself, demurely, as for a very profitable exercise, the fact really being that she enjoyed Pilgrim's Progress as she did the Arabian Nights, without the slightest regard for its

religious bearing. Jenny looked wide awake and full of talk.

"I am so sorry, Mary, you were not at church," she began, "we had such a good time. I spoke to ever so many people coming out, that I want you to see. Mrs. Wheelwright wants you to come there to spend the day. She told me to tell you."

"She gave the message to me," said Salome. "I wish, Jenny, you would be more careful to be truthful. I will tell cousin Mary what she said."

Jenny's eyes flashed. "I am as careful to speak the truth as you are, Salome Hobart. We were standing together when Mrs. Wheelwright came up to us."

"She called me by name," said Salome quietly. "And, Mary, she said she wanted to see you, because she knew your mother long ago."

"Knew my mother," exclaimed Mary, with hearty interest. "How I should love to see her!"

"I should think you were quite among strangers, from the way you speak," said Jenny. When Jenny was angry, she did not care on whom she vented her ill-natured remarks.

Mary was hurt; the tears actually came in her eyes, but she only answered gently:

"Perhaps you have never been away from your mother, Jenny!"

"I never was fifteen miles from Pure

Spring in my life," said Jenny softening.

"You ought to remember other people's feelings," said Salome reprovingly.

Jenny's better self was driven out of sight in a moment. "I am as apt to remember other people's feelings as you are, Salome," said Jenny, rising suddenly. "You are so disagreeable this afternoon, I won't stay here. I'm tired, and I mean to go and take a nap."

"Mamma does not like us to sleep on Sunday afternoons," said Salome.

"I wish you were half as particular about your own doings as you are about mine," said Jenny, going quickly out of the room, and shutting the door heavily behind her.

Mary was about to follow her, but Salome held her back, saying:

"It is of no use. When Jenny gets into one of these fits, the best way is to let her alone, until she gets over it."

Salome was not even conscious how much of the guilt of Jenny's anger was due to her own provoking remarks. Salome had spoken the truth in every instance, but it is "the truth spoken in love" that worketh good things.

"Pilgrim's Progress!" said Mary, taking up the book that had dropped into Salome's lap. "This is one of mother's favorites."

"I like it too," said Salome.

"That great burden of Christian's," said Mary, pointing at one of the illus-

trations. "No wonder he looks so weary under it."

"Any body would get tired carrying such a pack on the back," said Salome lightly.

"I meant the real burden," said Mary. "Don't you think it is hard to keep cheerful, when you keep doing wrong?"

Salome was not very well pleased with the insinuation that she did keep doing wrong. Sin made her unhappy many times in the day, but not sorrow for sin. She did not feel her burden yet.

"You must have a very poor opinion of yourself," said Salome, skillfully turning the conversation from her own case.

"I don't like others to think poorly of me," said Mary frankly.

The illustrations were very beautiful in the book over which the girls were bending, and for a few moments they looked at them in silence. At length they came to a representation of the pilgrims, as they were about to enter the Holy City.

"This is mother's favorite part," said Mary, and she began to read with great earnestness: "The men then asked: What must we do in the holy place? To whom it was answered: You must there receive the comfort for all your toil, and have joy for all your sorrow; you must reap what you have sown, even the fruit of all your prayers, and

tears, and sufferings for the King by the way. In that place, you must wear crowns of gold, and enjoy the perpetual sight and vision of the Holy One; for 'there you shall see him as he is.' There also you shall serve him continually with praise, with shouting, and thanksgiving, whom you desired to serve in the world, though with much difficulty, because of the infirmity of your flesh. There, your eyes shall be delighted with seeing, and your ears with hearing the pleasant voice of the Mighty One." Why was it that Salome was touched as she listened? Mary's faith had brought home the true meaning of the words to the heart of the listener.

Salome deserved only condemnation from the hands of her forgotten heavenly Father; yet in his mercy, he sent his Holy Spirit to plead with her young soul. There was a whisper that bade her seek the eternal city, and the presence of the "Mighty One." A longing arose to be a follower of the King who shall reign forever. Would Salome hearken to that whisper? Would she cherish that longing until it became the fixed, guiding purpose of her life?

Chapter Eighth.

Hour after hour flitted by at Pure Spring, and so the winter wore away. Mrs. Hobart was sure to say every Saturday that she did not know what had become of the week, and that for her part it seemed as if every other day were Sunday.

Time was flying, flying fast; and yet each day was leaving its traces and making its changes.

Mary's cheeks were slowly rounding. Aunt Hobart's regulations, as well as her good cheer, were telling on Mary's delicate frame. Early hours, pure air,

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abundant exercise, freedom from study, and a quiet, matter-of-fact life, had had their natural effect. Mary found herself growing less sensitive, and more buoyantly cheerful. The faults that she had reasoned against, struggled against, prayed against, seemed fading away without exertion on her part.

We are too apt to look upon our Lord as a calm, uninterested observer of our efforts to overcome our peculiar temptations. He is rather a hearty partaker in the work. He knows the difficulties that arise from our circumstances and our natural character. He knows when we mean well, yet fail because of our own weakness or the force of outward things. Dearly he loves to

take the faithful Christian, who has been struggling through discouragements, and place him where circumstances shall aid instead of hindering his improvement.

He had seen Mary Burns reasoning against tears, painful blushes, and wounded feelings, when she was wearied by an overtaxed mind and depressed by a delicate body. He had heard the earnest prayers in which she had asked to be able to cultivate that charity which "thinketh no evil, hopeth all things, believeth all things;" and is free, truthful, and cheerful. He had sent her outward aid, in improving health, and the hearty, outspoken, unimaginative spirit at her aunt's.

The providential hand had contrived this change; but it had wrought through the love of a wise, watchful mother.

Mary had grown less sensitive and yet more humble. If she had not had much of true humility, she would not have been well pleased with her position in her aunt's family. She was quietly treated as inferior, in most respects, to Jenny and Salome.

It was evident that in the details of household duties, in power to endure fatigue and exposure, and in general wisdom in the conduct of worldly affairs, Mary was as a little child, compared with her more experienced cousins.

They were not backward to perceive their superiority, and to allow Mary to know that they perceived it.

This did not seem to annoy her; so that she was allowed to go on in her own quiet course. She could now even bear to be laughed at because she persevered in reading to old Keturah every Sunday, and had actually succeeded in teaching the old woman to say many verses of Scripture, precious verses which Mary had culled with much thought and many prayers, and which she believed were received by Keturah's heart, as well as stored in her memory.

Then Mary had hit upon a plan for interesting the boys on Sunday after-

noons, a plan in which the whole family eventually joined. A subject was chosen — as, for instance, the duty of alms-giving; each member of the family bringing in, in the evening, some texts enforcing that duty.

Jack and Joe were particularly pleased when they could outnumber their father in the texts collected, and Mary was glad when she saw Salome and Jenny "searching the Scriptures," for she hoped that they might "learn of Jesus, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write."

Salome's outward deportment was but little changed. Had that whisper of the Spirit been forgotten?

Salome's struggle was in her heart,

and before her God. She had found out her besetting sin. She knew that jealousy was her overpowering temptation. She knew it, but she had not yet conquered her tormenting enemy.

Spring had come. The academy — two miles from Pure Spring — was opened. A new teacher had been obtained, and there was rejoicing through the neighborhood.

Mrs. Hobart had no idea of having her daughters' education neglected. She but endured their winter without study, and striven to make it bear upon their domestic training; but she could not long have been contented with letting their minds lie fallow.

"I don't believe Mary will ever be

able to walk two miles to school," said Salome.

"We can send you on wet days," said Mr. Hobart cheerily. "Mary, you can walk it in fair weather, I dare say?"

"I should like it," said Mary. "I am quite a walker now."

"A real country girl; rosy and cheerful!" said Mr. Hobart with a loving smile.

Salome did not look cheerful at that moment.

Salome patronized Mary very much on the way to school that morning; gave her unnecessary help in rough places, and was quite too lavish in her offers to relieve Mary of the few books with which she was burdened.

Mary took it all in kindness. She would not allow herself to suspect any wrong feeling as lurking under this outward show of protection. This way of showing superiority was kept up when Salome and Jenny were fairly in the school-room, with their cousin. There were old scholars to whom they could introduce her. They could tell her where she would find the pleasantest seat, and, in short, take her under their general direction.

So far every thing went on amiably. Mary studied the "things that make for peace," and did not care how she was estimated; so Jenny's quick temper was not aroused, or Salome's face overclouded by her peculiar fits of silence.

Mary's modesty, however, could not hide her proper position as a scholar from the discerning master.

Among pupils far older than herself, Mary was ranked, and was in hardly a single class placed with her cousins.

This was too much for Salome. She was scarcely out of the school-room, when she said in a bitter tone:

"It is a shame for Mr. Bryan to be so partial to you, because you are from the city. I suppose, Jenny, she will hardly think herself fit to walk home with us, poor ignorant country girls!"

Jenny cared very little for her rank in the school, so she had what she called "fun" with the girls; but Salome's remark encouraged her to say something unkind too.

"O Miss Mary Burns! Of course she is to be set over us."

"We can't dress as nicely, of course Mother thinks we must wear plainer clothes!" said Salome, whose enemy was triumphant.

Mary was silent; but her tears were falling under her vail. Mary was tired with the mental effort she had made, and the struggle she had passed through in overcoming her natural diffidence. She did not dare to trust herself to speak.

For some time the girls walked on in silence. Then Salome began again:

"You never told us, Mary, you understood French, or that you knew any thing about Latin. I suppose you

thought we were not capable of appreciating a young lady who was so far advanced in her studies."

"I never thought to mention it," said Mary quietly.

Mary's calmness seemed to rouse Salome more and more. She was determined to make her cousin feel, and show her feelings too. She liked to observe Mary's want of self-command, as if there were no other way of showing an undisciplined spirit, excepting by tears.

Mary bore up bravely, now trying silence, now a soft answer.

Jenny joined with Salome, becoming a little piqued herself, and yet looking on the whole affair as half-play.

At length Salome grew desperate,

and said: "You treat us as if *we* were the poor relations come a cousining, Miss Mary, with your dignified manners. It is very well for you to be a good scholar, for you will probably have to earn your bread, being a school-marm!"

"Now, that is too bad!" said Jenny. "What would father say to that, Salome Hobart?"

Mary's fortitude was gone; she could stand no more. Down on a great stone she sat and cried as if her heart would break. It was vain for Jenny to try to comfort her; she motioned to her cousins to go on, and leave her to follow.

"I will pack my trunk and go home to-night," thought Mary. "I can not

stand such treatment as this. Mother would not wish me to do it;" and the tears fell in a perfect shower. Mary's lonely walk was full of bitterness. She could see her cousins in the distance, going on before her, and she seemed to herself humiliated, cast down to the ground.

Mary went directly to her room as soon as she reached the house, and taking up her pen, she wrote to her mother a long, full account of what had occurred.

Should she send that letter, to grieve her mother's heart? Should she refuse the generous hospitality her uncle had extended to her? Should she expose Salome's unkindness? This surely

could not be the Christian course. There must be a "more excellent way."

Mary knew there was an Adviser near at hand. She prayed for true forgiveness, for a loving spirit, and when she rose from her knees, her way seemed plain to her. Salome could not have meant her bitter words, in all sincerity; she had been triumphed over by a sudden temptation, and was perhaps even now mourning over her fault. Mary had resolved to meet her cousin, at the dinner-table, with her usual manner, and to give no explanation of her own swollen eyes.

The meeting with Salome did not take place as expected. Salome plead-

ed a headache, and remained in her own room. Mr. Hobart was absent, and Mrs. Hobart thought it unwise to inquire into the cause of Mary's recent tears. The boys had their own fun, at Mary's expense, but she laughed too at her nose, swollen till it glistened before her eyes.

Jenny was pledged to silence. The twin-sisters had their own quarrels, but they never cared to expose each other to rebuke.

And how was Salome engaged? How was she enjoying herself in her quiet room?

Poor Salome! Mary had shed tears; her tears came easily, but Salome was not given to such outward expressions

of her feelings. Yet, there she was, weeping in an agony of bitterness. Her resolutions were broken. Her temptation had utterly triumphed. She had been guilty of meanness and cruelty toward her unoffending cousin. Salome saw herself, and she hated what she saw.

For many weeks Salome had been secretly trying to follow Jesus, and to trust to him for forgiveness. Her religion seemed now to be a wicked mockery. She dared not to pray. She felt herself unworthy to speak to her heavenly Father. Would she "go and be reconciled to her cousin, and then come" to her Lord for forgiveness? Once the thought passed

through her mind. But no! she could not own herself in the wrong, humble herself so low. Bitter jealousy was still unconquered in her heart, and she knew it. She might apologize for its late exhibition, but how would it ever be rooted from its firm position?

The misery of a long-indulged sin! No new resolutions, no feeble walking in the right path, no weak faith can conquer such an enemy! "Resistance unto blood," persevering, watchful, prayerful, Christ-supported resistance, alone can come off triumphant.

Chapter Ninth.

SALOME and Mary had met, without exchanging a word on the late disagreement. Salome had been cold and constrained, and Mary a little more subdued and gentle than usual, and so the affair seemed to have passed over.

"School-life is beginning to wear upon Mary," said Mr. Hobart, a few days after the occurrences mentioned in the last chapter. "Our horseback rides must begin. To-morrow is your holiday, and to-morrow you shall have your first lesson."

Mary's face brightened.

"There, now, you look right again, pussy," said Mr. Hobart fondly. He had not been slow to perceive the late change in Mary, but he little knew that a pained heart instead of an overtaxed brain, was wearing on her.

Saturday morning came, and the horses were brought out, greatly to the joy of all the young girls.

"I can only take two at once," said Mr. Hobart. "You, Salome, can wait till Mary has had her ride."

"No! no!" said Mary, shrinking back, and looking timidly at her cousin.

Salome loved her father's good opinion, and she forced herself to say: "Let

Mary go first! That is right, father. I insist upon it!"

Mary was forced. to consent.

While the little party were absent, Salome paced the hall in a most unenviable state of mind. Jealousy, jealousy of Mary was the one tormenting feeling that colored all her thoughts.

The sound of horses' hoofs approaching rapidly, brought Salome to the door. Mary was flushed with the recent exercise, and her face was perfectly beaming.

"Now, I suppose, I can go," said Salome coldly.

"Yes, come, now it is your turn," said the father cheerily, as he lifted

Mary lightly down from her position. "Why, Salome," he added, "Mary is going to make a perfect rider. I never saw any body sit a horse so much to my mind."

"O uncle!" said Mary, blushing.

"She can't do this!" said Salome, who had mounted in an instant.

Salome dashed along the wide road, and attempted to leap some palings, which divided it from a field. She had made the leap a hundred times before, but now the thing was done incautiously. The horse hit his feet upon the bars, stumbled, and fell, and Salome was sent flying over his head.

Not five minutes after Salome had paced the hall, so full of strength and

vigor, she was lying helpless on her own bed, and moaning with pain. There her father's strong arms had laid her, and there her mother was striving to soothe her, and to minister to her in her sufferings.

Agony of body and mind, Salome was doomed to endure.

During the few short moments that she had lain on the ground, within a few feet of the struggling horse, her life had swept past her like a swift dream. She had seen herself and her sinfulness, and felt the possibility of standing before God unforgiven.

Time for repentance! How precious it seemed to her then! How precious it will seem to us all when we shall be called to meet our heavenly Judge!

Chapter Tenth.

The household at Pure Spring seemed utterly changed. It was no longer a scene of busy activity. There was silence in the hall; silence on the stairway. Even Jack and Joe had learned to take off their heavy shoes at the door, and move noiselessly about from room to room.

Poor Salome! She could not bear the slightest jar, the slightest agitation. Her head was racked with pain. Her nerves were so sensitive, that she caught the sound even of Keturah's movements in the distant kitchen.

She had received a shock from which she might never recover. Had she been smitten in punishment for the wicked selfishness and jealousy of her heart? Ah! no. Our God is full of loving-kindness and tender mercy! Even Salome's poor, faint, fitful efforts to do right had not escaped his watchful eye. He had seen her struggling helplessly against her cruel master, her besetting sin. His right hand of power had been outstretched to set her free.

As she lay, helpless in body and humbled even to the dust, Christ in his beauty was revealed to her. Her soul was made to understand that he came to suffer for sinners, and to redeem them from the power of their sins.

The dying thief was forgiven. Repentant Peter was owned and honored by his reconciled Lord. And poor Salome dared to cling to the cross of Jesus, and trust that, relying in his perfect righteousness, she too might be pardoned, sanctified, saved.

All this went on in the silence and darkness of the sick-room. No human eye saw Salome in her humiliation. No human ear heard her prayer of penitence.

She was too weak, too unnerved to speak to those around her of aught that was agitating her heart.

How precious to Salome was her father's tenderness! How she blamed herself that she could for a moment

have thought that any one could make his warm, loving heart indifferent to his child. She received his kindness as a blessing of which she was unworthy, and felt that she had forfeited a right to his trustful affection.

Mrs. Hobart was no less devoted, but her active duties had in a measure unfitted her for the quiet, patient watching by a sick-bed that makes a good nurse. She was better satisfied to be doing something for Salome, even when absent from her, than to sit in the dimness, checking every unnecessary motion that jarred upon the nerves of the sufferer.

It was now Mary's gentle hand that was most soothing to Salome's aching

temples. It was Mary's light footfall that gave no pain. It was Mary who never seemed weary of the dullness of hour after hour of quiet watching. It was Mary's sweet voice that now and then breathed some blessed word of comfort from the best of books.

There was pleasure and pain to Salome in Mary's nursing. Pain predominated at first. She could not bear to receive such tenderness from one whom she had injured, and she avoided meeting Mary's loving eyes. Slowly this feeling passed away, and the time when Mary returned from school became the happy moment of the day.

Jenny sometimes shared her cousin's duties; but she was sure either to

rattle the glasses on the table, knock down the spoons with a terrible clatter, or commit some other misdemeanor that sent her in mortification from the room.

Mary had been sitting with Salome through a long afternoon, when there was a quiet tap at the door. Mary knew the meaning of that summons. It was Susannah, who had come to sit with Salome while the family were at tea. Mrs. Hobart had not lost her love of punctuality, and Mary rose promptly to be at the table before grace was said.

As she was stepping quietly along the hall, her aunt met her. Mrs. Hobart was not generally demonstrative, and Mary was surprised when her aunt

threw her arms round her neck and kissed her very fondly.

"What should we have done without you, darling?" she said. "These dear little delicate hands are better in the sick-room than those that are used to rougher work. It is not the strongest who are the most really useful after all. I shall never forget your kindness to our Salome."

The tears were in Mary's eyes as she said:

"I love to sit with Salome; and I am so glad if I can help you in any way."

"Help! Why we all rely upon you. I should have given up at once when Salome was hurt; but you looked so calm and hopeful, it seemed to hold

me up. I love you as if you were my own."

"I believe the accident will be a great blessing to us all!" said Mary. She would not say to Salome; but she had not failed to notice the new gentleness that had crept over Salome, as she lay and meditated on the love of Jesus to her unworthy soul.

Mary had forgiven from her heart Salome's bitter words; but now for the first time was their sting wholly extracted. Mary had trained herself to think of herself as a useless relative, accepting the kindness of her mother's true brother; but now she might feel herself useful and beloved, and she was happy.

Chapter Eleventh.

SALOME was coming down-stairs for the first time. Months had passed since she had looked forth from the pleasant dining-room windows, or seen the family gathered round the table.

Now a great chair was placed by the open casement, and all was ready for the invalid.

Beautiful is the tenderness of a strong man. Mr. Hobart's kind face was softened and sweet as a child's, as he gently sustained his daughter's feeble form, and guided her uncertain steps.

There was subdued joy in every face as Salome took her seat among the family group. Sickness had worked wonders at Pure Spring. Just the softness and thoughtful kindness that was needed there, had been brought out in this time of trial. We will not say how far this change was due to Mary's quiet example. She felt the altered atmosphere, but thought not of her own instrumentality in bringing about that alteration.

Salome did not feel humbled by the open acknowledgment of all, that she was the delicate one, and therefore to be cared for. She knew that it was love that slackened her father's manly tread that he might keep pace with her

slow footsteps. She knew it was love that had made Jack and Joe rob every room of its cushions, that she might have a perfectly luxurious resting-place. She knew it was love that made Mrs. Hobart so restless and so uneasy, until Keturah came in with the sweet bread that was to be the invalid's dinner, while the others partook of a more hearty meal.

"Why, Miss Salome! but you do looked changed a heap! I'm mighty glad to see you on your two feet again!" broke forth Keturah.

Salome could smile at the rough remark, for she knew that it was love that had touched the old woman's tongue.

Ah! it is not mortifying to be delicate, when love would soothe every pain, and rejoice over each step toward returning health.

Salome looked round on all with deep, quiet satisfaction. Each face in the group that gathered about the table seemed dearer to her than ever before.

What a thanksgiving that was which now went up from Mr. Hobart's heart. He had his family once more together, and his gratitude welled forth in its fullness. Prayer and praise rose together; praise for past mercies, and prayer for such love to their Giver as that Giver deserves.

That was a very cheerful meal.

Mr. Hobart could laugh and chat in his old way now.

"Mary," he said, in his own playful tone, "Mary, child, I used to think I had a large family, but I find I made a great mistake; it was not complete until I had my little, slender one, my little reed, for us all to lean on when trouble came."

"Uncle, dear uncle!" said Mary, tearful and blushing. She did not dare to look at Salome. Angels might have looked at Salome at that moment.

God had given her the victory. That was joy to Salome, far out-weighing all her sufferings. She could hear Mary praised now without a pang. She could see her father look so lov-

ingly on her cousin, and yet rejoice. Through the grace that is promised to all who truly seek it, Salome had triumphed over her fault.

God answers our prayers—he helps us in our temptations. He can, and he sometimes does, so purify the heart that in the midst of old drawbacks and old difficulties, it can conquer old besetting sins. He can do this, but more commonly he works by means; he leads us by his own path to the mount of joy where we would be.

God had humbled Salome, and made her see her own vileness, and his almighty power. He had shown her Jesus, willing and all-powerful to save. He had made Mary's tender kindness a

daily need of Salome's life. He had shut Salome up to loving her cousin, and had helped love to overcome the bitterness of jealousy.

Those who loved Mary now, loved one who was truly dear to Salome; and so the temptation was removed. Mary's praise was but the echo of what was stirring at Salome's heart.

Ah! could we learn that new commandment, "to love one another," then would strife and envying, jealousy and heart-burnings, be banished forever.

"O Lord! who hast taught us that all our doings without charity are nothing worth, send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of

peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before thee. Grant this, for thine only Son Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

Chapter Twelfth.

SALOME had gained strength rapidly after she was able to be in the open air. Now she had begun once more to take her needle in her hand, but she was not yet the vigorous, industrious person of the former days.

Mary and Salome were sitting in the little bower that crowned the slope on which the garden brought forth its store of gay flowers, and, farther down, its rich provision for the table.

"It seems to me as if the world had grown more beautiful since I was sick," said Salome thoughtfully. "I do so

enjoy being out here, where I can see down the valley. The river never looked half so charming to me before. I do not believe there is as sweet a place as this in the wide world.

"It is very beautiful," said Mary. "I am glad you love your home so dearly."

"Why shouldn't I?" exclaimed Salome, "with so many kind friends about me. I ought to be happy; and then I have so many things to be thankful for. Mary, I am so glad you came here, and yet—and yet—there is something I want to tell you."

"What is it?" said Mary, drawing closer to her cousin's side.

"I was very, very unkind to you at

first. You know that, but you do not know how I struggled against it; how I wanted to be better. I meant to be kind to you, but—but I was so very jealous, I could not bear to have you loved or praised, and that led me all wrong. I am very, very sorry; but I believe God has forgiven me, and now I want you to say you will forget the past and try to love me."

Salome spoke slowly and with difficulty. Even now it was hard for her to make this confession.

"The past is all forgotten, and I do love you dearly," said Mary warmly. "I think we shall love each other better than ever before, now that we are both trying to serve the same Master. I

knew you had found the best Friend. I saw it when you were sick."

"Did you?" said Salome. "I could not speak of what was in my mind then, but I did so want you to know how I hated myself. I longed to tell you about my wicked, jealous feelings; but I was afraid you would despise me."

"I have too many of my own faults to struggle with to despise any body," said Mary modestly. "I want you to forgive me too, and then we will try to help each other on."

"Dear Mary," said Salome fondly, "it is hard for me to believe that you have any faults."

"You won't find it as hard to believe

that of me!" said Jenny, coming into the bower at the moment. "I know and you know what a poor, hot-tempered, harum-scarum thing I am. But I want to be better; I really do. Salome, God made us twins. I don't want to be separated from you. I want to go the way you are going. I want to have the same heavenly home." Jenny's tears stopped her utterance.

Salome's answer was a silent kiss.

"And have the same Saviour," said Mary in a low, earnest voice.

"Yes, and have the same Saviour. Without him, I should not dare to think of such a thing. I am so bad," said Jenny.

"Mother says we are all bad in our

own way," said Mary. "She says we each have our task given us in our enemies we have to conquer. She calls our besetting sins our enemies. It is when they are secret they are most dangerous. When we once know them, mother says, we need not fear, for God can give us strength to overcome every temptation."

"We will all try," said Salome very soberly, as she put her arm round each of the girls. "We will all try."

"And God will give us the victory!" said Mary fervently.

A long silence followed. Those three young hearts were uplifted in prayer. They had found out the source of strength. There was hope for them in the life-long conflict.

A besetting sin is one that only dies when the breath leaves the body, and the purified soul ascends to its Saviour. The disease appears again and again, and the remedy must be as frequently and faithfully applied.

Salome would have to go on subduing jealousy with such unselfish love as is the pure fruit of the spirit of all grace.

Jenny would have to learn forgiveness and gentleness ever anew from her divine Saviour, her perfect pattern.

Mary would rely more and more on the love of her Lord, and go on teaching her sensitive spirit to be bold in his cause, and fear no evil with such a Friend and Counselor. There is

strength laid up for all who need. Our enemies — our besetting sins — will become our friends, if they lead us to distrust ourselves, and looking only to Christ as our righteousness, to go forward leaning wholly on him, sure of being upheld, guarded, brought off victorious.

Chapter Thirteenth.

It was delightful to Jack and Joe to be no longer obliged to restrain their spirits and move about, as they said, "like old men."

They seemed bent on making up for lost time, and kept up such a hallooing, laughing, and merry-making, when they were out of doors, that old Keturah said she "might as well live among the Injins and be done with it."

A new tenderness toward her children seemed to have sprung up in Mrs. Hobart since Salome's illness. For the first time it had been brought home to

her motherly heart what it would be to have one of her children taken from her by the relentless hand of death. A new desire was kindled within her, to make their earthly pathway as glad as might be, and to be sure that the end of their pilgrimage was to be in the eternal garden of the Lord.

Jack and Joe made good use of their privileges when they were in the open air, but in the house they seemed to have more regard for their mother's wishes than ever before.

Joe actually came fairly into the parlor one afternoon, when he wanted Mary, instead of standing in the hall and screaming for her at the top of his voice.

When he found, however, that she was in the garden, he did not hesitate to clear the flight of stone steps at a bound, and shout, "Mary! Mary!" till the echoes replied.

It would have been useless for a human voice to have attempted to answer him, and that his cousin well knew; the air was too full of his ringing tones to be burdened with any thing else.

Mary was just at hand, sitting with her book under a low catalpa-tree. She stepped lightly up to Joe, and touched his shoulder.

A regular hurrah was his response, as he gave her a letter, a letter from her mother—the most welcome of all things to Mary. Her face was always

full of deep, loving interest, when she read her mother's letters, but now it was beaming with joy.

"She is coming, Joe," said Mary, looking up to give Joe the bit of news for which he was waiting. "She is coming, and she is going to take me home with her."

"Well, I'm real glad!" said Joe heartily. "Not that we want to get rid of you! You know what I mean."

Mary did not think of being hurt at her cousin's rough way of expressing his sympathy in her joy. She understood him, and would not take offense when none was meant. Joe was the only one in the house to say he was glad at Mary's approaching departure.

There was a general mourning. Old Keturah declared she should "give right up," though she did not exactly state whether she meant to take to bed permanently or give up her profession as cook, to have more time for the "luxury of grief."

Neither Keturah nor any body else expected to change their way of life because Mary was going away, but every body felt that a light was to go from the household. Each was to lose a valuable helper in daily life, as well as in the heavenly path.

Mr. Hobart could not really say whether he most rejoiced at the idea of seeing his long-loved sister or grieved at parting with his pet. He concluded,

as he always did, to look at the cheerful side of the question, and to dwell upon the pleasure rather than the pain.

How full of happiness Mary looked when her mother was actually seated beside her at her uncle's hospitable table. What a joy it was to hear that mother's voice once more and to clasp her kind hand.

The tone of Mary's letters had been most satisfactory; but the truth in Mary's face was more precious still to the mother. There she read not only full physical health, but she saw a free, trustful, frank look, which was all that face needed to make it perfect in the eyes of Mrs. Burns.

Her plan had succeeded. Her pray-

ers had been answered. With no maternal heart on which to weep out her sorrows, Mary had leaned wholly on the heavenly strength. In Mrs. Hobart's home she had learned a lesson that she had failed to catch in the midst of the more refined atmosphere where she had been reared.

"Take a piece of this cake, aunt Mary," said Salome, who looked for the moment almost as happy as Mary herself.

"Some of your handiwork, Salome?" said Mrs. Burns, tasting and approving.

"Mary made it all herself," said Salome proudly.

"Yes, Mary has been quite my reliance in these things of late," said Mrs.

Hobart. "Since Salome has been so delicate, Mary has taken her place in domestic matters."

Mrs. Burns's glance of pleasure more than repaid Mary for the effort she had made to be useful in a way that was naturally distasteful to her.

"She knows how to do every thing now, I tell you!" said Jack.

"She is first-rate!" said Joe heartily.

Mary could not help laughing at this blunt praise.

There were others at the table who could have joined their voices to the boys', but their feelings were too deep to find vent then and there.

When the young people had retired, Mr. and Mrs. Hobart sat with their guest by the cheerful fire.

"I need not tell you," said Mrs. Burns, "how grateful I am for all your kindness to my Mary."

"Our Mary she is too," said Mrs. Hobart warmly. "She has done more for us than we have had it in our power to do for her. Sister, you have not forgotten the 'one thing needful' in the training of your child."

"I believe the blessing of God is on my darling," was Mrs. Burns's earnest reply.

"And the blessing of every body who knows her," said the uncle warmly. "Susan and I here had been going too much in a dull, sleepy, half-Christian way, for all we meant well. Mary has taught us, by her quiet example, more

than twenty sermons. We hope we are doing better, thank God! The good leaven seems to be working in our children now."

"And doing more in our own hearts I hope," said Mrs. Hobart modestly. "I never mean to let worldly cares occupy my mind as they have done. Your Mary seems to have taken me back to my young days, when I first became a Christian, and I hope I have made a fresh start."

"That is what we all must try to do, as the years come and go," said Mrs. Burns earnestly. "Dear brother and sister, I am glad you love my little Mary. You have been of more service to her than you think. She needed

just the training for practical usefulness that you have given her. Susan, she will thank you for it all her life. I shall not now fear to take her to our humble home."

"You need not fear to take her to any home," said Mr. Hobart heartily. "Such a daughter would adorn any position and bless any house in which she dwelt."

Yes, Mary Burns was now really to be contented and useful wherever her lot might be cast. Her visit at Pure Spring had not been in vain. There she had given and received; she had influenced and been influenced. As each character has its besetting sins, so it has its peculiar virtues. In the

home, in the church, in the community, we meet, we are placed together, that we may "bear one another's burdens," and help each other in the conflict with sin.

Our very unlikeness makes us better Christian friends, better helpers in the heavenly path. Let us not quarrel, because we are sinners each in his own way. Let us rather strive to perfect our own character, such as it is. So let us do our part toward making here the harmony that will be complete when we are all clothed with His righteousness and partakers of his glory, who is our all-sufficient Saviour.